

Oral Health

Definition: Oral health status includes common oral and craniofacial diseases and conditions such as dental caries and periodontal disease. In this chapter, dental caries is used as a measure of poor oral health. Dental caries is an infectious disease caused by *Streptococcus mutans*. Rampant caries means 7+ teeth decayed, missing or filled.

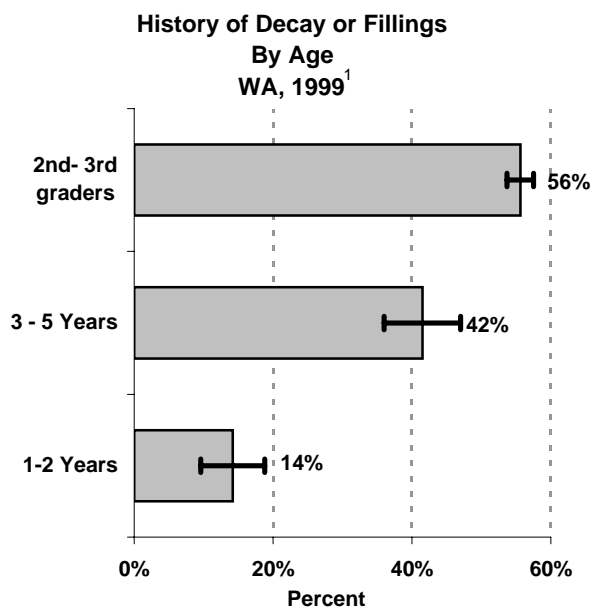
Key Findings

- ❖ Oral health is an essential component of health and dental caries is the single most common chronic disease of childhood. Dental caries are caused by an infectious disease process that nationally affects about 80% of all children by age 18.^{1,2}
- ❖ Based on data from Washington's Smile Survey 2000, about 21% of 2nd-3rd graders had untreated decay and 15% were found to have rampant (7+) caries. Asians, Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and American Indian/ Alaska Natives had higher rates of rampant caries.¹
- ❖ Low income children in the 2000 Smile survey were twice as likely to have rampant caries as other children. Children in rural communities were at higher risk for dental caries and rampant caries.¹
- ❖ Sealants can reduce the development of caries. Overall, about 47% of 2nd-3rd graders surveyed had sealants. Blacks, Asians and Pacific Islanders were least likely to have sealants.¹
- ❖ Research has shown that poor oral health during pregnancy can lead to dental caries in infants and young children. PRAMS data for 2000 show 27% of mothers who were Grant Recipients went to the dentist during their pregnancy compared to 47% for Other Medicaid recipients and 56% of non-Medicaid mothers.^{3,a}
- ❖ Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that about 58% of the Washington State population has access to optimally fluoridated water through public water systems, an increase from 53% in 1992.⁴
- ❖ The 2010 National Healthy People targets are to reduce the proportion of children ages 6-8 with untreated dental decay in primary and permanent teeth to no more than 21% and that at least 50% of all children have dental sealants in place.²

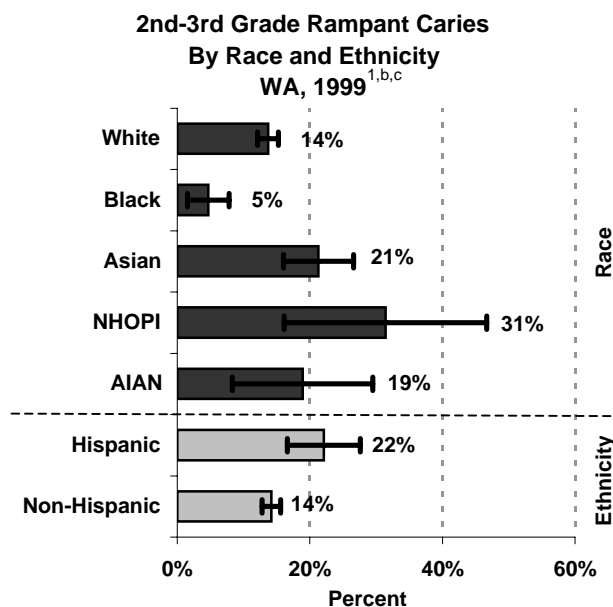
Oral Health Status of Washington's 2nd & 3rd Grade Children ¹		
Oral Health Status Indicator	%	95% Confidence Intervals
Percent with decay experience - primary and/or permanent teeth	56	(54-57)
Percent with decay experience - permanent teeth only	15	(14-17)
Percent with rampant decay (or a history of)	15	(14-17)
Percent with untreated decay	21	(19-23)
Percent needing treatment	22	(20-23)
Percent needing urgent treatment	4	(3-4)
Percent with sealants	47	(45-49)
Mean number of cavities in those children with decay	2.4	-

Oral Health (cont.)

Age



Race and Ethnicity



Data Sources

- ¹ Smile Survey 2000, Washington State Department of Health, May 2001.
- ² Department of Health and Human Services (US). Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health. 2nd edition. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office; November 2000.
- ³ Washington Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), 2000.
- ⁴ Populations Receiving Optimally Fluoridated Public Drinking Water-United States 2000, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. February 2002.

Endnotes

- ^a The source for the Medicaid designations used in PRAMS is the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, First Steps Database. Medicaid women had either prenatal care or delivery paid by Medicaid. Medicaid women include those who are very low income and receive cash assistance (TANF) in addition to Medicaid (Grant Recipients) and those who receive Medicaid with no cash assistance (Other Medicaid).
- ^b AIAN - American Indian Alaskan Native
- ^c NHOPI - Native Hawaiian Other Pacific Islander